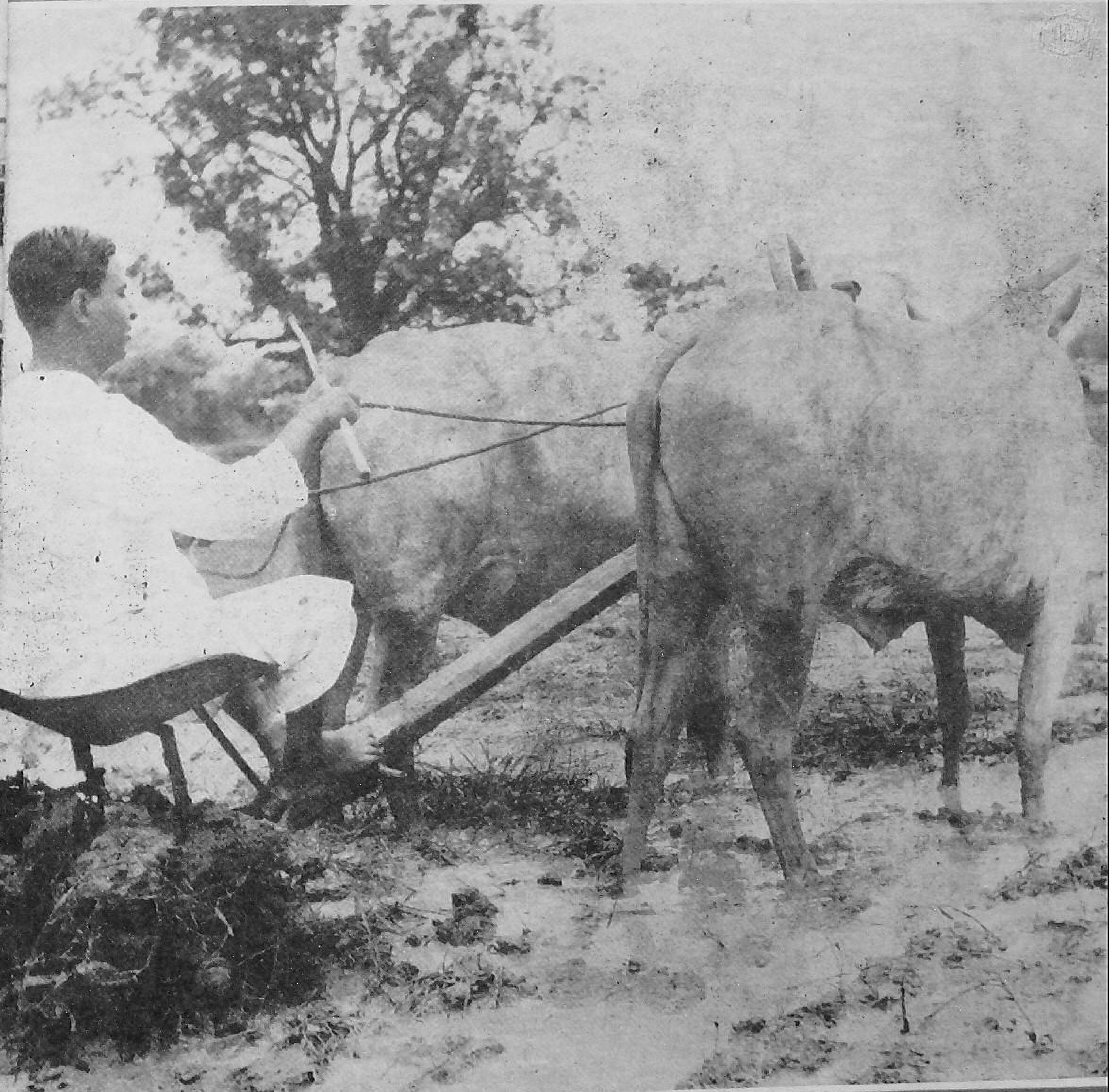
Panchayati Raj

AUGUST 1964



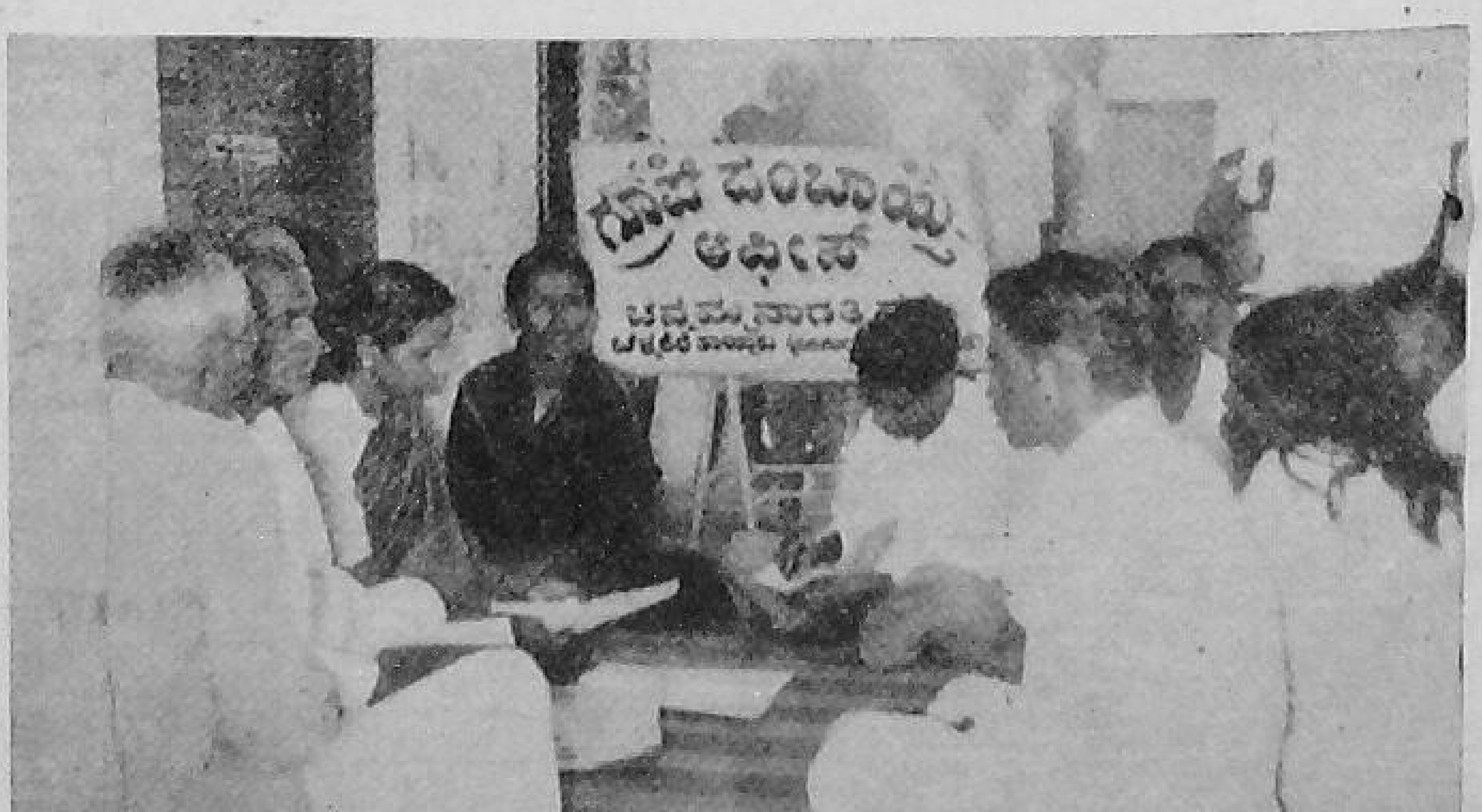
KISAN NARAYAN BHANDARKAR—*A progressive farmer and Vice-Chairman of Panchayat Samiti, Tirora in Maharashtra. Through judicious application of fertilisers and other improved farming practices advocated under the Package Programme, he got an average of 32 mds. per acre from 8 acres of his land under paddy. In the picture, he is seen puddling his paddy fields with a puddler.*

A Housewife As Panchayat Chairman

Smt. Basamma, Chairman of the Channammanagathihalli Panchayat seen at the Laxmi Mahila Samaj Kendra of which she is the founder president.

Tailoring is one of the activities of the Shri Laxmi Mahila Samaj Kendra.

Smt. Basamma, presiding over the Panchayat meeting.



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CONTENTS

LETTERS 1
BHANDARKAR—A PIONEER AMONG FARMERS —*S. K. Buzruk* 2
GOBAR GAS PLANT COMES TO A VILLAGE 4
HYBRID MAIZE FOR MORE YIELDS AND MORE PROFITS 6
A HOUSE WIFE AS PANCHAYAT CHAIRMAN —*D. N. Pallegar* 8
SONS OF THE SOIL.. .. 10
CO-OPERATIVE AGRICULTURAL SERVICE SOCIETY —*Surjan Singh Gill* .. 11
COMMUNITY ON THE MOVE 13
FROM THE CENTRE .. 15

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LETTERS

SELECTION OF B.D.Os.

Sir,

IT HAS been observed that sometimes key personnel like B.D.O.s are recruited from other departments such as the Revenue etc. These new entrants with their old bureaucratic mentality find it too difficult to adjust themselves in their new environments that call for a more dynamic and service-oriented approach. In fact they remain misfits throughout. Moreover, their recruitment causes resentment and disappointment amongst the development staff since this narrows down their avenues of promotion. There are instances where V.L.Ws with a record of excellent good work done by them for ten years or even more, have remained rooted down to their posts because of non-availability of chances of promotion. It is, therefore, suggested that as a rule B.D.Os should be selected from development functionaries only.

2.6.64
BANGALORE,
MYSORE.

Yours etc.
KRISHNA RAO

* * * *

PANCHAYATS AND CHOWKIDARS

Sir,

IN THE PUNJAB State, Village Chowkidars are under the administrative control of Revenue authorities. They are paid their wages out of Chowkidara Tax collected by the Village Lambardars from each house.

It has been experienced that the chowkidars do not cooperate fully with the Panchayats. They do not care to carry out the instructions issued by the Panchayats. It is essential for the success of Panchayati Raj at village level that the control of chowkidars should be given to the Panchayats and they should be paid out of Panchayat funds which should be collected by the Village Panchayat instead of the Lambardars.

1-6-64
MEHAM.
ROHTAK (Punjab).

Yours etc.,
OM PARKASH KADYAN
Social Education &
Panchayat Officer.

* * * *

PETTY CANAL OFFICIALS UNDER PANCHAYATS

Sir,

ONE OF THE main reasons for the slow increase in agricultural production is the lack of co-ordination between the Panchayats and the canal Irrigation department. The cultivators do not get a well-regulated supply of irrigation water from the canals. This long-standing complaint of the farmers would not lend itself to a satisfactory solution unless the canal patwari and the *pansal* i.e. the canal official who regulates the supply of water to the cultivators, are placed under the control of the Panchayats. If this is done, the villagers inspired by a sense of confidence and enthusiasm would try to dig field channels and bring new land under irrigation. The existing wide gap between the available irrigation potential and its utilisation would be bridged and food production will receive a great impetus.

5-6-64
MIRZAPUR,
UTTAR PRADESH

Yours etc.,
RAM CHARAN SINGH

(*Continued on page 3*)

BHANDARKAR

A PIONEER AMONG FARMERS

S. K. BUZRUK

THIRTYFOUR year old Shri Kisan Narayan Bhandarkar, a progressive cultivator and Vice-Chairman of the Panchayat Samiti, Tirora in Maharashtra has set an example to other farmers of the village by increasing crop yields through improved farming practices.

HIS PASSION : SOCIAL SERVICE

Social service had been a passion with him ever since his childhood. It was in 1957 that he developed an interest in Ayurvedic science and opened his own small pharmacy and rendered no mean service to the village folk thereby.

His active social life started from 1954 onwards, when he became a member of the Multipurpose Society Mundikota and continued to remain its member till 1956. Later he was a member of the Gram Panchayat from 1956 to 1960.

With the introduction of the Panchayat Raj, he contested the elections in 1961 and became the Vice-Chairman of the Panchayat Samiti Tirora. He is a very active worker and is always willing to help the needy. Villagers have a great respect for him.

After the death of his father he had to look after the cultivation of his land. His father left 16 acres of land half of which only was under cultivation. In 1954 he sold out 4 acres of barren land and utilised the amount for purchase of agricultural implements and a pair of bullocks and started cultivation on scientific lines. He found that with better cultivation practices his yields per acre increased considerably. The sound advice and assistance rendered by the village level worker came in very handy to him.

The Gram Sevak and Shri Bhandarkar holding the healthy and week seedlings in their hands respectively.

With the introduction of the Package Programme in the district in 1963-64 he was convinced by the field staff that he could get maximum outturn by following a package for his paddy crop. He evinced a great interest in the programme and by taking up package practices for 8 acres of land he set an example to other villagers how they too could increase their yield of crop.

I visited Mr. Bhandarkar recently when puddling of paddy field was going on. The cultivators of the village were also present. The puddling operation was being done with a puddler. To my enquiry as to why he was using the puddler instead of the country plough for puddling the field, this enlightened farmer said that puddler was more economical and worked efficiently as compared to the country plough. The other cultivators who saw its working were also convinced about the efficiency of the implement. Due to the initiative of this cultivator, this implement has become very popular in this and surrounding villages. Mr. Bhandarkar had a total area of only 8 acres of paddy land and he managed the

operations with one pair of bullocks. The land owned by him was of average fertility.

EMPHASIS ON FERTILISERS

One of the most important factors in increasing the crop yield is the application of balanced fertilisers. This aspect has been given emphasis under the Package Programme. Different manuring schedules for irrigated and non-irrigated paddy have been worked out for the district. Mr. Bhandarkar applied 50 lb. of ammonium sulphate and 125 lb. of superphosphate per acre as basal dose at the time of puddling. The seedlings were transplanted on August 5, 1963 keeping a distance of 9″ between rows and 6″ between plants; transplanting was delayed due to break in the Monsoon. Two hoeings with Japanese hoe (*Tauchi Gurma*) were given to the crop. Top dressing with ammonium sulphate at 50 lb. per acre was given one month after the transplanting of the crop. A third dose of 25 lb. of ammonium sulphate was given before flowering. A cultivators' rally was arranged and they were shown how by judicious application of fertilisers and following other package of practices cultivators could get better crop. The cultivators were still apprehensive about the use of fertilisers. But when they saw the difference between a fertilised crop and non-fertilised one they realised the value of fertilisers and are becoming fertiliser-minded.

32 MD. PADDY PER ACRE

Mr. Bhandarkar's crop was harvested on December 28, 1963. He got an average yield of 32 md. per acre compared to the normal yield of 20 md. per acre he used to get till the previous year. It means an average net income of Rs. 190 instead of Rs. 115 which he got before. The Package Programme had shown how a cultivator could increase his crop yields by better methods of cultivation and by efficient use of fertilisers as per crop requirements. With scope for more intensive cultivation, it would be possible to increase paddy yield up to 40 md. per acre.

Initially, the response from the neighbouring cultivators was not very encouraging. But since seeing is believing, they are also becoming confident that they too can raise their yields by coming under the fold of the Package Programme.

LETTERS

(*Continued from page 1*)

DEFECTIVE COOPERATIVE BYE-LAWS

Sir,

ALTHOUGH cooperatives were started to eliminate the middle men and the vested interests, yet it is a fact that within the cooperatives themselves certain vested interests have grown up who in collusion with the official machinery have somehow managed to perpetuate themselves. I know of several cooperative organisations where the same group of people has been able to come into power over several successive years. Such an unhealthy development is contrary to the spirit of democracy. Rules should be so framed that the concentration of power in the same hands again and again is prevented. In my view, it should be laid down in the bye-laws that no individual can be an office-bearer of a cooperative for more than two terms of one year each.

Yours etc.
LAL SINGH

15-6-64
PATTI,
AMRITSAR (Punjab).

DEVELOPMENT OFFICIALS AND THE WEAKER SECTIONS

Sir,

DURING THE last decade the Central as well as State Governments have enacted several laws aiming at the amelioration of the lot of Harijans. The Ministry of Community Development and Cooperation has also framed several rules and procedures seeking to benefit the Weaker Sections. But these remain mostly on paper. In effect, very little help reaches the deserving Harijans, the reason being that the development officials who administer the policies and programmes are still of the old mentality and they adopt an unhelpful attitude towards the Harijans. Unless adequate measures are adopted to ensure that the officials faithfully carry out the Government decisions, I am afraid, the lot of Harijans will not change materially.

Yours etc.,
Krishna Murthy

19-6-64
HYDERABAD,
ANDHRA PRADESH

A GOBAR GAS PLANT

A young man, who had migrated to Bombay from a village in distant Uttar Pradesh to become a mechanic, was fascinated by a gobar gas plant which he saw at the Kora Kendra. On returning home on leave, he at once set up a gas plant with great pride, hoping that his uncle and head of the family, who was against the idea would be pleased when the plant began functioning.

Below we publish a free rendering of some of the letters that passed between the uncle and the nephew which throw a flood of light on the fast changing socio-economic conditions of the family under the impact of the newly set up Gobar Gas Plant.—Editor

A USELESS THING

20th March, 1962

Dear Nephew,

OUR FIELDS are productive and maintain yields on manure produced during the monsoon. The household is self-sufficient in fuel with cowdung cakes made during open season, supplemented by *arhar* stocks and other field wastes. Where is the need for spending money on a very doubtful venture like the gobar gas plant? I cannot believe that a gas capable of burning can be produced by the addition of water to cattle dung. Even if it can be produced, we have no experience of it. When we take up a new thing in the family we should be well informed of its effect upon the family. I do not like this gobar gas plant.

Yours etc.

* * * *

THERE IS HOPE

1st April, 1962

Dear Uncle,

I HAVE received your letter and am sorry to note that Gobar Gas Plant has failed to give you satisfaction. But I do hope when the plant begins to function, all your doubts would disappear.

Yours etc.

MORE THAN EXPECTED

1st May, 1962

Dear Nephew,

THE PLANT is working. It seems it does more than is expected of it. But every night, after the gas-holder is fully up, the noise of the bubbling of gas takes away my sleep.

Yours etc.

* * * *

WOMEN WORST AFFECTED

10th June, 1962

Dear Nephew,

YOU WILL remember that traditionally the cooking was removed from the kitchen room to the open courtyard during summer months. This year it has remained in the kitchen. It is no longer necessary for the women to move out for cooking because of the gas. I believe the women are the worst affected by the gas plant.

Yours etc.

* * * *

MANURE IS SHOWING UP

20th August, 1962

Dear Nephew,

THE EXTRA manure is now showing up in the crops standing in our fields. This year our fields stand apart from the rest of the neighbourhood, with an unusual growth of crops. The result is that they have become the centre of admiration of every passer by. Many come to cast an evil eye on the crops. I must tell you we were never unhappy with our crops in the past. I do not like to be marked out from the rest of our neighbours, even for higher returns from the fields. This season we will reap the effects of all those jealous eyes on our higher yields of crops.

Yours etc.

COMES TO A VILLAGE

PRODUCTION BOOSTED UP

3rd October, 1962

Dear Nephew,

I HAVE great pleasure in informing you that as a result of the manure from the Gobar Gas Plant which we used in our fields this time, the yield of bajra was 50 maunds of grain in place of the usual 12 maunds per bigha of land.

Yours etc.,

* * * *

NOT FAILED FOR A DAY

7th October, 1963

Dear Nephew,

IT IS NOW more than a year that the plant has been with the family. I had secretly expected your novelty to go wrong before the year was out, but this was not to be! The devil! It works with a vengeance. It has not failed for a day with the result that the family has become as dependent on it for fuel gas as it is on the well for water. It is having its full impact upon the family.

Yours etc.,

* * * *

WOMEN AS LITTLE QUEENS

12th December, 1963

Dear Nephew,

LOOK AT the women of the family. Each one of them has become a little queen, and why not? They have now very little to do. Time hangs heavily upon their hands. Your gas plant has taken away two hours of their morning labour from them. During this time they used to transport fresh cattledung, make cakes out of it, turn the half-dried ones, transport dried cakes for storage and carry some of them for the day's cooking. They no longer have to bring the *arhar* stocks from the fields for fuel. Cooking without tears takes much less time with gas. It takes even less time to clean the utensils. All this has made them lazy.

I have a feeling that for some months past the women's saris are becoming whiter. No; I have never seen a more idle lot of women in any family all my life. No wonder. They have begun paying more attention to their dresses and those of the children. What else could be expected in a family whose traditional labour is taken away in exchange of idleness? It makes me nervous, when I ponder over these and other changes that are coming over the family due to your gobar gas plant.

Yours etc.,

* * * *

ORDER HAS CHANGED

20th April, 1964

Dear Nephew,

DURING OUR lifetime, we never thought of white-washing the interior of the house. Now the smoke has gone. The blackness is slowly passing away from the walls. This has had its effect upon your brothers. They want to hasten up the progress by white-washing the walls. This is not all. They say the plant gives more gas than can be used in cooking. They want to instal a gas lamp with mantles to use this extra gas.

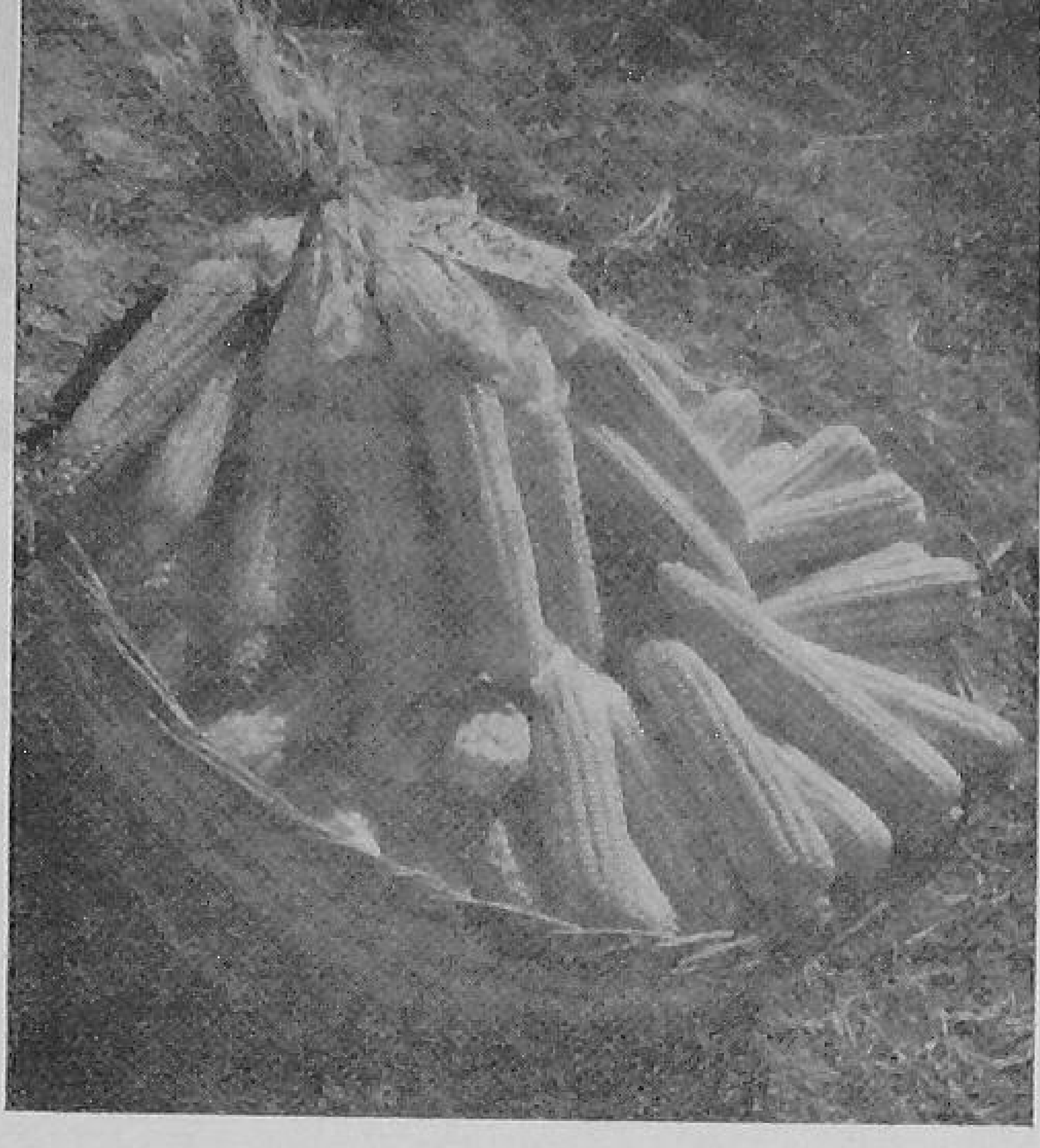
Formerly we did whitewash the house on the outside and got lamps with mantles for festive occasions. Now the order has changed,—brighter lamps, white walls, whiter dresses, more leisure, lesser work and larger returns from the fields with less labour. There is a kind of stir in the family which I cannot explain. This much is clear : the former contented and happy life of the family is gone. The stage is set for the devil to enter the house. Only God can save the traditions of this family which was so industrious, contented and happy—the traditions which are being slowly shattered by the gobar gas plant.

Yours etc.,

(*Courtesy : Jagriti, 25th June, 1964*).

HYBRID MAIZE

FOR MORE YIELDS AND MORE PROFITS



A basketful of hybrid maize cobs

THE AVERAGE production of maize in our country is about 10 maunds per acre, which is about one-fourth of the average yield in Western countries. The main reason for the low yield is the lack of quality seed, and the solution is now offered by the evolution of the hybrid maize varieties, giving as high a yield per acre as 40 to 80 maunds.

In Indian rural homes maize preparations are popular. Each region has its own culinary art and every skilled housewife makes her own tasty dish. The most common use of maize, especially in north India, is for making *rotis*. *Makki-ki-roti* and *sarson-ki-sag*, with butter or *ghee*, is the popular combination in the north, and is truly a delicacy. Maize is also taken in the form of parched grains or roasted ears.

WHY GROW HYBRID MAIZE ?

Producing higher yields of hybrid maize, no doubt, involves greater effort and bigger investment. But the reward is worth all the effort and money. One can earn an additional profit of over Rs. 200 per acre.

In the case of ordinary varieties of maize, plenty of manure, judicious use of fertilizers, timely planting and proper spacing ensure high yields, but only to two or two and a half times the average yield. With hybrid maize having a higher yield potential, on the other hand, it is possible to get handsome yields, thus making it worthwhile to put in larger effort and money by way of better agronomic practices and application of manures and fertilizers.

The new hybrids have the same grain type as that of local varieties, and the *chapatis* made from them are as sweet or sweeter than those from the local maize. What is more, these hybrids have a high degree of resistance to maize diseases and greater tolerance to pests than local varieties and also produce more fodder of better quality.

Further, the production of foodgrains per acre can be considerably increased by growing a hybrid maize-wheat rotation followed by improved practices. This way, with suitable maize hybrid and wheat varieties, it is possible to obtain grain yields of about 70 to 80 maunds of maize and 30 to 40 maunds of wheat per acre on the same acre of land. This means 100 to 120 maunds of foodgrains per acre per year. The rotation would be very profitable to farmers in the northern plains, where maize and wheat are the two major cereals.

WHAT IS HYBRID MAIZE ?

But what is hybrid maize? Hybrid maize is a new variety of maize which is produced through a series of steps. First desirable strains, known as inbred lines, are developed. The inbred lines are the building blocks for the hybrids, and usually four such lines are involved in each hybrid. By themselves the inbred lines are weak growing and give low yields. But when they are interspersed in the desired combinations, they transmit high yield and other outstanding qualities to the hydrids.

To get the full advantages of hybrid maize, however, using fresh seeds each time a new crop is grown, is very important. No doubt, the maize seed from the farmer's crop would give as good or better yields than the local maize seed. Yet, much of the advantage of hybird maize will be lost unless new hybird seeds are obtained for planting each crop.

THE EXCELLENT NINE

Research work to develop hybrids of various crops of different soil and climatic conditions has been going on at the plant breeding stations in the country for some years. In 1961, four double-crop maize hybrids were released. There were *Ganga* 1, *Ganga* 101, *Ranjit* and *Deccan* for northern plains, i.e.; Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra, and Peninsular India. Recently, five more such superior hybrid varieties have been developed. These are : *VL* 54 and *Himalayan* 123 suitable for the Himalayan hill areas, *Ganga Safed* 2 for white maize-growing areas, *Hi-Starch* for the starch industry and *Ganga* 3 for the Indo-Gangetic plains.

The Hybrid Maize Farm, Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi.

Close-up of a hybrid maize cob

The nine hybrids have excellent reproduceability, vigour and pollin formation, good standability and husk cover and attractive, bold grain. Their maturity period ranges from 80 to 120 days and their yield performance is very good, from 22 to 152 per cent more than that of local varieties.

The new hybrids are also fairly resistant to diseases and tolerant to pests. They have another advantage in that they are more leafy and remain somewhat green at the time of grain harvest and thus produce 32 to 400 per cent more fodder and of a better quality than local varieties.

CERTIFIED HYBRID MAIZE SEEDS

The seeds of the nine hybrids are being produced under the sponsorship of the National Seeds Corporation, New Delhi. Care should, however, be taken to obtain seeds of only those hybrids which are suited to the area, and which can be ordered from the authorized seed producers in the region. The seeds are sold in bags which are sealed and labelled to ensure their excellent quality and to prevent adulteration with those of poor varieties.

A HOUSEWIFE AS PANCHAYAT CHAIRMAN

*D. N. PALLEGAR

Smt. Basamma

"I HAVE been blessed with all the necessities of life and my family is quite happy and contented. Providence has given me enough and I have no difficulty whatever in regard to food, clothing and shelter. But, all the same it is my earnest desire that, like my family, the entire village should be happy and contented. I admit with all humility that I am not capable of serving the cause of either the Nation, or the District or even the Taluka to which I belong; but I thought that I could at least strive hard for the betterment of my village and some villages around it. It is with this earnest desire that I have accepted the chairmanship of this village Panchayat," said Smt. Basamma, Chairman of the Channammanagathihalli village Panchayat, when I contacted her recently at the panchayat office.

AS HOUSEWIFE

Channammanagathihalli is a village in the Challakere Development Block of Chitradurga District in Mysore State. "I suppose, your household affairs such as tending your children, serving your husband and looking after your servants etc., take away all your time. How do you find time to attend to your duties as the Panchayat Chairman?" I asked her. Smt. Basamma replied with a smile, "I get up very early in the morning and finish off cooking etc., by 8 O'clock. Then I go to the fields and do some work there such as sowing, weeding and the like along with our servants till noon. After that, I attend to the work in the Panchayat. In the evening, after doing some work at the Mahila Samaj I get back to the kitchen."

Immediately, a member of the Village Panchayat told me that Smt. Basamma, is not only a very good housewife well-versed in the culinary art, but also an ardent social worker. I also learnt that no body raises any objection over anything that she wants to do for the welfare of the village. To make sure myself, I asked her, "Do the male members of the panchyat co-operate with you in your efforts?" Pat came the reply, "Of course, they do. They are all very co-operative and they all help me in the discharge of my duties." The people of the village have rightly elected Smt. Basamma, the ever-enthusiastic and highly idealistic lady of the village, as the chairman of their panchayat.

Smt. Basamma is also the Founder-President of the Lakshmi Mahila Samaj of the village. When I saw her at the Samaj, she was accompanied by two other ladies, whom she likened to her two hands. She introduced one of them as Smt. Gundamma, another woman-member of the village Panchayat, and the other as Smt. Arundhati. She called them as her two 'sisters' who were always with her and always helped her in her day-to-day affairs.

AS PANCHAYAT CHAIRMAN

It is in the fitness of things that this village panchayat which has inherited the name of a lady, namely Channammanagathi, has a lady as

its Chairman. This Group Panchayat consists of Chennammahagathi, Matsamudra, Chattekamba and Junjaragunte villages. It has 13 members including two lady members and two members form the scheduled caste. It covers an area of 8,580 acres and has a population of about 4,650. The Panchayat has organised several sub-committees for Agriculture, Industries, Education and Health. A court to deal with defaulting parents who fail to send their children to school as required under the Compulsory Primary Education Scheme has also been set up by the panchayat. But the court has not received any complaints from any one so far, as all the villagers have got all their children of school-going age admitted to the schools.

Since its inception, the Panchayat has undertaken several welfare measures and has achieved remarkable progress. It has provided 24 drinking water wells in all the four villages coming under this group panchayat. Financial assistance to the tune of Rs. 2,000 has been extended to Chattekamba, Matsamudra and Junjaragunte villages for putting up school-buildings. Two Nursery schools have been established and two Young Farmers Clubs have also been organised. The members of these clubs assist the panchayat in its improved agricultural production programme etc. The club at Junjaragunte has a building of its own and 20 of its members are also members of the local Radio Rural Forum. It has also given a lead in regard to vegetable cultivation in the village. Cashing upon the voluntary labour of its members, the Club has also undertaken a drainage scheme in the village.

INTENSIVE FOOD PRODUCTION

Having regard to the demands of the National Emergency, the Panchayat has undertaken an intensive food production programme in addition to its other normal duties. Twentyfive demonstrations were organised in compost making and transplantation of paddy for the benefit of the ryots. A Gram Sahayaks' Training Camp was conducted at which 50 persons received training in agriculture, animal husbandry, public health, co-operation etc. Agricultural implements were provided to 50 poor ryots at subsidised rates and another 50 will be helped likewise this year. It is also proposed to cover 350 acres under improved seeds during the current year. A programme of crop competition and award of prizes to the winners has also been drawn up. There are about 80 irrigation wells under the purview of the panchayat which provide irrigation facilities to about 200 acres. It is proposed to dig 50 more wells so as to bring more lands under irrigation.

Village Junjaragunte has got its own Village Voluntary Force with 38 members on its rolls. It assists the panchayat in improving the village roads, constructing school buildings, providing drainages and looking after village sanitation etc. There are two Middle and four Primary schools with a total student strength of 325. Arrangements have been made for providing the children with mid-day meals. Smt. Basamma has also been responsible for the establishment of a Nursery school at Chennammanagathihalli, and it has been functioning very well under her Chairmanship. Facilities exist in the school for the teaching of tailoring, basket-making, embroidery and other handicrafts.

MARCH TO PROGRESS

Thus under the able and enthusiastic stewardship of Smt. Basamma, the Panchayat is steadily marching on the path to progress. The services she has been rendering to the four villages under her charge are praiseworthy. But personally, she is not satisfied with what she has been able to do so far and desires to do much more, especially for the welfare of the women and children of the villages.

Daughter of Shri Chauloor Shivarudrappa, Smt. Basamma is married to Shri Chelumappa a ryot of Channammanagathi village. With her vast experience in house-hold affairs, she has been striving not only for the welfare of her family, but also of the entire group of four villages which constitute the Panchayat. She has thus proved the validity of the adage that "the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world". She has also shown to the people around that the united efforts of women folk can be instrumental in the establishment of peace and prosperity not only in their families, but also in their villages and the country at large.

**Shri D. N. Pallegar is the Editor of Panchayati Rajya, a monthly journal in Kannada brought out by the Mysore State Government. The above article is a free rendering by him of his article published in the June '64 issue of Panchayati Rajya*—Editor.

SONS OF THE SOIL

A Young Inspiring Leader

34 YEAR OLD Bhiku Ram Jain, the young Sarpanch of Village Panchayat Ringnod, Jaora Block in Madhya Pradesh has done outstanding work in the twin fields of development and co-operation. During his short tenure of Sarpanch, he has been responsible for inspiring the village people to complete construction works worth over a lakh of rupees through self-help. Besides a four-mile long road, they have constructed 5 sanitary wells, 2 lady teachers' quarters, a Panchayat Bhawan, and pavement throughout village streets. Under his inspiring leadership, the membership of the Service Co-operative has increased from 62 to 131 and its deposits from Rs. 1000 to 8000. The society has met the full requirements of fertilisers, improved seeds and insecticides of its members. Their biggest achievement has been the contourbunding of over 600 acres through self-help.

Bhiku Ram Jain

* * * *

And so the Conviction Grew

AN INTERESTING example of extension of Package Programme in those areas where age-old methods of cultivation were being followed, has come to light in village Balodi in Pallari Development Block of Raipur district.

Shri Matwa, at 50 years of age, when people are credited with little capacity to change, did not at first respond to the programme despite the most determined persuation, preferring his own traditional way of cultivation. He contented himself with watching the results of the cultivators who had undertaken the programme and the compost demonstrations organised in the village during the last two years. In 1962-63 the yield from his 12 acres of paddy land was only 160 maunds through his traditional ways of cultivation. He was also not a member of the Service Cooperative Society. Ultimately, however, the successful results of Intensive Agricultural District Programme induced him to adopt the programme in his entire holding of 12 acres during the year 1963-64. He also became a member of the service cooperative of the village, He was surprised to get a yield of 228 maunds of paddy by improved practices. He is now convinced of the beneficial results. He has also decided to take to all those farming practices which are advocated under the package programme.

* * * *

Inspector of Schools Turned A Farmer

TWENTY YEARS ago, Shri Vaman Rao was working as an Inspector of Schools. With the desire to work as a progressive farmer on retirement he managed to sell three acres of land which his family owned in different parts of the district. He settled in village Jaur and from that money he purchased a large plot of barren land. He tried to develop irrigation in this plot from the nearby bund. He planted citrus trees (Mosambi) but gave up growing them due to lack of water. He then took "nalabandi" on his own and extended his coverage of land gradually. After some time, he had a well 60 feet in diameter and 40 feet deep fitted with oil engine pump. He is eager to have a boring investigation to be performed in his well in order to increase its irrigation supplies. At present he grows sugarcane, brinjal, onion, garlic, wheat, jowar and other vegetables. He claims an income of Rs. 30,000 per year from his 40 acre plot.

COÖPERATIVE AGRICULTURAL SERVICE SOCIETY

Nilokheri's Experiment

SURJAN SINGH GILL

NILOKHERI needs no introduction. To every Indian, it is symbolic of the new India which was born after the tragic aftermath of partition, —a haven of refuge for the vast masses of humanity uprooted from their homes and finding shelter in this country. Nilokheri enjoys the distinction of being one of the first few townships to have sprung up to give shelter to refugees fleeing Pakistan. But, to planners and social scientists Nilokheri signifies much more than this. To them, it is not merely a township of a few thousand human beings but one of the few laboratories where new ideas pertaining to human problems are being constantly put to the test and methods for their implementation in the field are being evolved. Instances of such succesful experimentation are the Community Development and Refugee Rehabilitation programmes. One of the latest concepts to undergo the test at Nilokheri is the Intensive Village Development Scheme, under which the Orientation and Study Centre adopted 5 neighbouring villages and the Nilokheri township. The Scheme was introduced during 1961-62 when the Centre took up the task of implementing it.

Kisan Basti forms a part of Nilokheri township. Although Nilokheri is an emerging township, many of its socio-economic problems are similar to those of the villages nearby. The Centre carried out a survey of the area, carefully analysed the felt-needs of the people, and gave top priority to the problem of increasing agricultural production. As a natural corollary, the Centre got interested in reviving the defunct Joint Cooperative Society at Kisan Basti which was formed some time back primarily to provide agricultural and allied facilities to the cultivators of the area. But the failure of the venture had made the villagers sceptical about cooperative societies. It was an uphill task to goad them back to the cooperative fold. Lot of persuasion and cajoling had to be done before the villagers could be brought round. Ultimately the Centre's efforts bore fruit and the villagers formed an agricultural cooperative service society.

Thus the Nilokheri Kisan Cooperative Agricultural Service Society, Kisan Basti was born with 32 (out of 42 agricultural families) members. The share-capital of Rs. 100 per member was paid by every member either in instalments or otherwise in one year.

Floating the Society was only a prelude to the massive task of organising the people into a cohesive group. Numerous meetings, individual and group discussions were held and at last it was resolved that the Society should first tackle the irrigation problem which was the most pressing one encountered by the members.

The fields of Basti are irrigated by a seasonal canal that provides water only for 2½ months during the Kharif Season. Rabi crops are entirely dependent on the rains. Therefore, the first step the Society took was to provide irrigation facilities for Rabi season. The objective was two-fold, i.e. to increase the productive capacity of the farmers and to convince the members as well as the non-members about the ability of the Society to solve their problems. The area had two tube-wells which for want of repairs had remained useless. The Government was successfully persuaded to put them in order. But the needs of the area were too much for these tube-wells to meet. The Society approached the Central Cooperative Bank, Karnal, for a short-term loan of Rs. 6,000 to sink tube-wells. After much persuasion, the loan was obtained. It was divided into four equal parts of Rs. 1,500 each and given to four groups of members for sinking four tube-wells. The tube-wells became the property of the Society. Irrigation from these four tube-wells was found insufficient. So the Central Cooperative Bank was again approached for a loan of Rs. 2,000 which was utilised for sinking another tube-well.

The assured irrigation facilities not only enabled the members to practise double cropping, but even helped to change their attitude towards agriculture. Previously agriculture in the area was confined to the production of staple crops for internal consumption. But now the members have started raising cash crops like potato, vegetables and green fodder, etc. This change in cropping pattern has resulted in the rise of income. Last year it increased by about 75% and this year, it is hoped, that with the assured supply of water for irrigation and adoption of improved methods of agriculture the income will be doubled. It will not be out of place to mention that the members have invested Rs. 10,000 as their contribution towards sinking of tube-wells.

CONSOLIDATION OF HOLDINGS

The farm holdings in the area were generally scattered. This had made agricultural operations difficult. After the formation of the Society the members often discussed this problem in the Society meetings, and urged for a solution.

The Society ultimately undertook the job unaided by any external agency and within a period of one year consolidated about 600 acres of land which included 400 acres of the non-members. A Patwari who knew the mechanics of land measurement and correct procedures of maintaining records and relevant papers was engaged and paid Rs. 1,500 as remuneration. This consolidation has now been approved by the Government of Punjab. This shows how the Society has brought about a sense of social solidarity amongst the beneficiaries.

SEED & FERTILIZER DEPOT

Apart from effecting consolidation of holdings the Society was busy exploiting other avenues for increasing agricultural production. The Department of Agriculture, Punjab was approached to help establish an Improved Seed Agency and a Chemical Fertilizer Depot by the Society to ensure timely and regular supply of improved seeds and fertilizers. The request was favourably considered and a seed store was opened by the Society in September, 1962 and a Fertilizer Depot in April, 1963. During 1963 the Society had distributed about 880 mds. of improved seeds and 595 quintals of chemical fertilizers.

The Society is also preparing balanced poultry feed and is selling the same at reasonable rates.

NEW PROPOSALS

The Society is now proposing to have power tillers and tractors for cultivating the lands of the member cultivators. This will be a definite help to the members.

Plans are ready to have power-driven fodder cutters for the members. Besides being a time-saving device, this will make available cheap and ready fodder for the cattle of the area.

The members of the Society are producing about 7,000 maunds of paddy annually. It has been resolved to have a rice huller and process the paddy in the region. It is estimated that by selling the finished product the approximate gain would be in the neighbourhood of Rs. 30,000 per year. Steps have already been taken in this direction and it is hoped that by the next season the huller will be in operation. There is a scheme for encouraging hand-pounding of rice. Each family, it is being proposed, will keep one set of hand pounding equipment and produce hand-pounded rice independently. The produce will be marketed through the Co-operative Society.

The initial success of the Society has started attracting those who did not join it at the beginning. Their eagerness to join the Society is gradually mounting. Some have already been accepted as members of the Society and the strength of membership has risen to 30.

The members as well as the non-members are now convinced that an Agricultural Service Society has greater potentialities for increasing agricultural production than a Joint Farming Society which, in their case, had proved a failure.

By creating proper leadership and providing technical know-how, the Orientation and Study Centre has been instrumental in making the Society a success. Residents of Kisan Basti are hoping for better things to come through the aegis of the Society.

Community on the Move

A TRIBAL VILLAGE FORGES AHEAD

SUTRATI, a small tribal village in Madhya Pradesh having a population of 344, has achieved remarkable progress in various development fields. All the 45 farming families have taken to improved farming practices involving use of improved seeds, fertilisers and improved agricultural implements. All the families have come under the fold of service co-operative. They have contributed a sum of Rs. 1,000 towards the construction of a school building. They have also contributed Rs. 825 for backyard poultry farm, Rs. 200 for Balwadi, and Rs. 100 each for a radio set and a hand pump. It was for these all round development activities that the village was adjudged the best at the State level competition held last year.

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VILLAGE VOLUNTARY FORCE IN KUPPAM BLOCK

THE YOUTH clubs of Chinnaobba and Prathicenu of Kuppam Block in Andhra Pradesh have constructed through voluntary labour two school buildings each costing Rs. 1500. Land has been donated free for the school. Another Youth Club at Paipalam has constructed a community hall costing Rs. 1000. It has also constructed a room for veterinary first aid centre.

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PROGRESSIVE VILLAGE OF KOLVAD

VILLAGE KOLVAD in Maharashtra has made astounding progress during the last ten years. It has a literacy percentage of 72. Proximity of Buldhana town provides assured market and hence vegetables are raised on a large-scale in the village. Fresh vegetables to the extent of about 10-12 cart-loads are sent every Sunday to the weekly bazar at Buldhana. In addition, about 200 seers of fresh vegetables are sent every day. One of the cultivators in the village has raised cauliflowers worth Rs. 1,100 from ¼ acre plot. Out of about 2200 acres of cultivated area 265 acres are irrigated by 48 wells. Electric pumps are installed on 21 wells while on 4 wells oil engines are working. Each of the 272 families in the village has atleast 1 compost pit while there are 113 other jointly owned compost pits. The village has invested about Rs. 22,000 in the National Defence Bonds, another Rs. 14,200 in the Small Savings scheme and has donated about Rs. 1,400 to National Defence Fund.

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CENT PER CENT LITERACY

VILLAGE BAWDA in Block Khantala, Satara District of Maharashtra which has a population of 1300 has attained cent per cent literacy. All the 700 adults of the village have become literate as a result of the Gram Sikhsha Mohim carried on with the help of 24 workers including 8 school teachers and 16 voluntary workers of whom ten were men and six women. Each of them had a group of nearly 30 adults who met every day for three continuous months. The Education Department supplied guide books to these workers and pamphlets to the adults for learning. The pamphlets relate to the daily life of the farmer. The Gram Panchayat supplied kerosene for lamps and the Block Samiti supplied books. Funds were also collected from the villagers. 90% children of school-going age go to school in this village.

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UNANIMOUS ELECTIONS

UNANIMOUS ELECTIONS have been reported by 28 out of 33 Panchayats of Andhra Pradesh. There was no untoward incident reported from any part of the block area. The Andhra Pradesh Government had announced a reward of Rs. 2500 to Rs. 3000 to each panchayat holding unanimous elections.

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VILLAGERS' TRIBUTE TO NEHRU

THE VILLAGERS of Jejusar of Jhunjhunu district in Rajasthan have decided to raise food-grains production by 25 per cent. The decision was taken at a condolence meeting held to mourn the demise of the late Prime Minister. The Gram Sabha paid tributes to Shri Jawaharlal Nehru and pledged to increase production to build India of Nehru's dreams.

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REALISATION OF PANCHAYAT TAXES IN U.P.

THE PANCHAYATS in Uttar Pradesh realised Rs. 1,33,98,101 in taxes during the last financial year. This included some arrears of the previous years. Last year's assessment of taxes amounted to Rs. 90,36, 922. The highest realisation of Rs. 21,47,448 and Rs. 19,31,503 was achieved by the Gaon Panchayats of Rohalkhand and Gorakhpur divisions respectively, while the highest assessment of Rs. 12,41,648 and Rs. 12,15,171 was made in the Meerut and Rohalkhand divisions respectively. Among divisions, Varanasi and Jhansi secured the highest percentage of realisation—82.04 and 81.34 respectively. Among districts, Jaunpur and Hamirpur realised cent per cent amount of Panchayat taxes.

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PADDY COMPETITION IN MADHYA PRADESH

VILLAGE AND Block Level paddy crop. competitions were arranged recently in Madhya Pradesh. 70 entries were received for village level competition and 11 for block level competition. Shri Mohammad Rasul of Awalya Kanhar and Shri Damaji of Badgaon in Lalburra Block won first and second places by producing 72 mds. and 71 mds. 18 seers per acre respectively.

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DEFENCE LABOUR BANK IN LALBURRA BLOCK

DEFENCE LABOUR Banks have been established in almost all the Gram Panchayats of Lalburra block. The people of the block deposited their labour of 4440 days and the members of the village Volunteer Force also deposited labour of 755 days. Thus the total number of days deposited in the Defence Labour Banks were 5195 valued at Rs. 8262 only and the amount deposited in cash was Rs. 310. The labour and amount deposited in Defence Labour Banks were utilised in repairs to minor irrigation tanks, construction of wells and roads.

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DEFENCE LABOUR BANK IN JAISINGHNAGAR BLOCK

DEFENCE LABOUR Banks have been started in all the 23 panchayats of the Jaisinghnagar block in Madhya Pradesh. During the year 1963-64, 9617 man-days were deposited voluntarily by the villagers. Full use of the above donation was made in digging and repairs of irrigation tanks and wells. In addition, other activities like construction of school and panchayat buildings, village roads, planting of trees and digging of compost pits etc., were also undertaken. All the 23 panchayats have formed V.V.F. with 1700 members including Dalpaties and Up-dalpaties.

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INTENSIVE CULTIVATION OF JOWAR

THE JHALRAPATAN Panchayat Samiti of Jhalawar district in Rajasthan has been chosen for intensive cultivation of 'Jowar' during the ensuing Kharif season and targets have been fixed. To begin with, only 5 per cent of the total area of 73,079 acres under 'Jowar' cultivation in the Panchayat Samiti will be brought under intensive cultivation.

About 800 kilograms of improved seed will be distributed among cultivators and 1820 maunds of seed will be treated with insecticides. About 350 maunds of fertilisers will be utilised and dry farming will be introduced in about 21,920 acres.

Every village level worker will be required to give four demonstrations regarding use of improved seeds and manures etc. Training to officers and staff connected with the implementation of the intensive cultivation scheme has also been given to achieve maximum yield.

FROM THE CENTRE

RURAL ELECTRIFICATION

A TOTAL of 37,457 villages have been electrified up to the end of January this year under the Rural Electrification scheme. Out of the total power supplied to rural areas about 42 per cent is being used for industrial purposes and about 40 per cent for agricultural purposes.

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WORKING OF COOPERATIVES IN IADP AREAS

THE UNION Ministry of Community Development and Cooperation has appointed a Working Group to study the working of Cooperatives in the Intensive Agricultural District Programme areas. It will suggest necessary measures to enable the cooperatives to lend their maximum support to the programmes. The terms of the Working Group will be to make an intensive study of the cooperatives in the Intensive Agricultural District Programme areas with a view to assessing their shortcomings and deficiencies. It will also recommend ways and means of making them vital and effective instruments for the furtherance of the Intensive Agricultural District Programme. The Working Group will consist of 9 members including representatives of the Planning Commission, Reserve Bank of India, State Bank of India, and the Ford Foundation.

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COOPERATIVES TO HELP WEAKER SECTIONS

IN ORDER that the benefits of cooperation may reach the weaker sections of the community, a scheme to organise agro-industrial and labour service cooperatives has been formulated by the Union Ministry of Community Development and Cooperation.

It is proposed to have one such cooperative in each Village Level Worker's circle, that is for a group of villages having a population of 7,000 to 8,000. The agro-industrial cooperatives will primarily cater to the needs of landless labourers. Initially, each cooperative is expected to have some 250 to 300 members.

The fundamental objective of these cooperatives is to organise manpower in such a manner as to undertake rural works programmes, public works and agricultural operations systematically. Besides, financial assistance will be provided to encourage poultry, dairy farming and vegetable and fruit cultivation among the weaker sections. Help will also be extended to organise such village industries as brick and tile making, processing of cereals, pulses, gur and khandsari, handmade paper, bee-keeping etc.

As the programme is one of considerable complexity and as marketing facilities are essential for the growth of agro-societies, initially 100 societies will be organised in places where marketing societies are sufficiently strong. However, before the end of the Third Plan, 250 more societies may be formed.

The organisation of the agro-industrial and labour societies does not, however, preclude a service cooperative undertaking similar functions. Wherever service cooperatives are strong, they may be encouraged to undertake programmes to help the weaker sections of the society.

The Government will provide a nucleus of funds for the organisation of the agro-industrial co-operative societies and steps to enlist the support of the Panchayati Raj institutions will be taken.

SHRI S. K. DEY'S ADDRESS

ADDRESSING the Conference of State Ministers of Cooperation and Backward Classes held recently in New Delhi, Shri S. K. Dey, Union Minister for Community Development and Cooperation, said, "An acid test for judging the success of our democracy and socialism would be the extent to which we succeed in our efforts to assist the backward classes of the community which have remained neglected for centuries." He added that cooperatives seemed to be the only instrument available to ameliorate and uplift the lot of the backward classes which constituted one-third of the country's population. There should be separate cooperative organisations from the national level right down to the ground level, catering exclusively to the interests of these people.

Shri Dey pointed out that this Conference was a unique event because it was for the first time since Independence that State Ministers for Cooperation, Backward Classes & Social Welfare and senior officials of the Central and State Governments were meeting together to tackle the problem on a high-priority basis. Despite the various provisions made from time to time to help the backward sections of the community, very little had actually percolated to them.

The Minister emphasised that a new leadership would have to be built up to rouse these people and make them self-reliant. It was the weak who required organisational assistance and we would have to discover a new organisation and voluntary leadership to utilise the resources and other provisions made for the welfare of the backward classes and build up a sound economic base for their development.

Shri Dey regretted that the traditioalists in the cooperative movement tended to be the most non-cooperative in pursuing a new approach and, in fact, offered vigorous resistance. He said that something would have to be done to meet this challenge and evolve a new non-traditional and unorthodox approach to render effective assistance from the cooperative movement to the backward people.

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STUDY GROUP ON TRANSPORT COOPERATIVES

THE PROMOTION of at least ten trucking cooperatives in every State annually during the Fourth Plan period has been recommended by the Study Group appointed by the Ministry of Transport to examine the scope for transport cooperatives and to indicate the lines of their development in the Fourth Plan.

The Study Group has also suggested that at least one taxi-slab cooperative in every city with a quarter million population should be formed during the Fourth Plan period.

The Group has also proposed that country-boats should be replaced by diesel tugs and dump barges, wherever possible, and that boatmen should be encouraged to form themselves into cooperatives for this purpose.

The Group has expressed itself strongly in favour of the early abolition of Jin and cycle-rickshaws and rehabilitation of rickshaw-pullers as members of auto-riskshaw coperatives.

The Group has suggested that a substantial provision should be made in the Plan for financial assistance, on favourable terms, to transport cooperatives. However, such assistance, according to the Group, should be confined in order of priority to genuine workers, users and service cooperatives. The Group has, in this connection, urged that banking institutions, oil companies, insurers and manufacturers and dealers in motor vehicles could, to their own advantages combine to accommodate the operators either by direct loans or by deferment of their dues.

Other suggestions made by the Group pertain to tax relief, managerial assistance and training facilities for worker members.

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MODEL VILLAGE OF NAGARAMGERE IN MYSORE

Members of Village Volunteer Force constructing a drain.

Villagers carrying silt from a tank

Silt being carried to the fields.

Ploughing the fields immediately after the harvesting of the crop is over, is one of the important farming practices adopted all over the country.

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